

Message Text

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ACTION CPR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2134

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FOR CODUS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJ: MS. NIXON'S VISIT TO BRAZL: BACKGROUND FOR
SCENARIO 6 ON CASE PEQUENO POLEGAR

REF: BRASILIA 1556

1. THE CASA DO PEQUENO POLEGAR WAS ORGANIZED IN SEPTEMBER 1967 AS A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION PROVIDING A HOME FOR NEEDY CHILDREN. CURRENTLY THE HOME PROVIDES FOR 87 CHILDREN RANGING IN AGE FROM 0 TO 12 YEARS. WITH THE COMPLETION OF ADDITIONAL FACILITIES NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION, IT IS PROJECTED THIS NUMBER WILL GROW TO 200 BY MARCH 1975. FOR THOSE CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE, FORMAL EDUCATION IS PROVIDED AT A SCHOOL NEAR THE CASA DO PEQUENO POLEGAR. SUPPLEMENTING THIS FORMAL SCHOOLING AND AVAILABLE TO ALL RELEVANT AGE GROUPS, THE HOME PROVIDES INSTRUCTION IN SUBJECTS SUCH AS PERSONAL HYGIENE, ARTS AND CRAFTS, READING, CIVICS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

2. THE CURRENT FULL-TIME STAFF AT THE HOME NUMBERS 16 INCLUDING ONE TRAINED TEACHER AND TWO QUALIFIED NURSES. SUPPORTING THIS FULL-TIME STAFF IS A VOLUNTEER GROUP OF 40 WOMEN FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WHO GIVE OF THEIR TIME AND ENERGIES THROUGH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS FUND RAISING AND THE
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CARE, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF THE CHILDREN.

3. THE HOME IS GOVERNED BY AN ELECTED, VOLUNTEER BOARD OF WOMEN CONSISTING OF THE PRESIDENT AND 10 OFFICERS.

4. FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE HOME ARE DERIVED FROM AN AGREEMENT WITH THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICE WHICH PROVIDES FIXED SUPPORT GRANTS FOR A NUMBER OF THE CHILDREN AND THROUGH FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH THE SCHOOL.

5. PLACEMENT PREFERENCE AT THE HOME IS GIVEN TO CHILDREN OF TUBERCULAR PARENTS, THESE CHILDREN CURRENTLY REPRESENTING APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT OF THE CHILDREN AT THE HOME. THE BALANCE OF THE CHILDREN HAVE BEEN ABANDONED, COME OF HOMES IN WHICH THE PARENTS ARE CLASSIFIED AS POOR AND SHOW AN INABILITY TO PROVIDE FOR THE CHILD, OR ARE THE CHILDREN FROM HOMES BEING MAINTAINED BY AND CONSISTING OF ONLY ONE PARENT (USUALLY THE WOMAN) WHO MUST WORK FULL-TIME AND IS UNABLE TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENTLY FOR THE CHILD.

6. THE LENGTH OF TIME A CHILD REMAINS AT THE HOME USUALLY RANGES FROM ONE TO TWO YEARS, ALTHOUGH STAYS OF A LONGER DURATION ARE NOT UNCOMMON. ALL CHILDREN PLACED IN THE HOME, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ABANDONED, ARE RETURNED TO THE PARENT OR PARENTS WHEN EITHER FINANCIAL OR MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANT OR UPON REACHING THE AGE OF THIRTEEN. THE ABANDONED CHILDREN, AT AGE THIRTEEN, ARE PLACED IN A LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTION PROVIDING CARE FOR OLDER YOUTHS.

7. THE FOUNDER AND PRSIDENT OF THE CASA DO PEQUENO POLEGAR IS MRS. RUTH PASSARINHO, WIFE OF THE FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CURRENT SENATOR FROM PARA. "DONA RUTH" PHOENETIC--DONA HOOCHY) AS MRS. PASSARINHO PREFERS TO BE ADDRESSED, WAS BORN IN BELEM, PARA. IN ADDITION TO BEING THE WIFE OF A FEDERAL SENATOR, THE MOTHER OF FIVE CHILDREN, ACTIVE SOCIALLY AND, ALSO, THE HOLDER OF A LAW DEGREE, SHE HAS FOUND THE TIME AND ENERGY TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN MANY SOCIAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES.

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8. MS. MARIA DO SOCORRO OLIVEIRA FONSECA (DONA MARIA) IS THE YOUNG (22 YEARS OLD), RECENTLY (5 MONTHS AGO) APPOINTED DIRECTOR WHO HAS WORKED AT THE CASA DO PEQUENO POLEGAR FOR ABOUT FOUR AND A HALF YEARS. A NATIVE OF THE STATE OF PERNAMBUCO, DONA MARIA HAS LIVED IN BRASILIA FOR EIGHT YEARS AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE NORMAL SCHOOL OF BRASILIA. CRIMMINS

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